

The Fisherman's Son.

I know the cold where land and water meet,
By yonder bill abutting on the main,
One while I hear the waves incessant beat,
Then turning round survey the land again.

Within a humble cot that looks to sea
Daily I breathe this curious warm life,
Beneath a friendly harbor's sheltering lee
My noiseless day with my still is rife.

'Tis here, they say, my simple life began,
And easy credit to the tale I lend,
For well I know 'tis here I am a man,
But who will simply tell me of the end?

There eyes first opened spied the far off sea,
Which like a silent godfather did stand,
Nor uttered one explaining word to me,
But introduced straight godmother Land.

And yonder state stretches that silent main,
With many glancing ships bespangled o'er,
And earnest still I gaze and gaze again
Upon the self same waves and friendly shore.

Till like a watery humor on the eye
It still appears wherever way I turn,
Its silent waste and mute overarching sky
With close shut eyes I clearly still discern.

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And yet with lingering doubt I haste each morn
To see if ocean still my gaze will greet,
And with each day dance more to life and song,
And tread the earth once more with toll'ring feet.

My years are like a stroll upon the beach,
As near the ocean's edge as I can go;
My tardy steps its waves do oft ^{sometimes} overreach,
Sometimes I stay to let them overflow.

Infinite work my hands find there to do,
Gathering the relics which the waves up cast;
Each storm both scours the deep for something new,
And every turn the strangest is the East.

My sole employment 'tis and scrupulous care,
To place my gains beyond the reach of tides,
Each smoother pebble and each shell more rare
Which Ocean kindly to my hand confides.

I have no fellow laborer on the shore,
 They scorn the strand who sail upon the sea,
 Sometimes I think the ocean they've sailed over
 Is deeper known upon the strand to me.

The middle sea can show no crimson dulcè,
 Its deeper waves cast up no pearls to view,
 Along the shore my hand is on its pulse,
 Whose feeble beat elsewhere is known of few.

My neighbors come sometimes with lumbering carts,
 As it would seem, my pleasant toil to share,
 But straightway take their loads to distant moor,
 For only needs and ballast are their care.

To by some strange coincidence if I
 Make common cause with Ocean when he storn
 Who can so well support a separate stay,
 And people it with multitude of forms.

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Oft in the stillness of the night I hear
Some restless bird presage the coming day,
And distant murmurs faintly strike my ear
From some bold bluff projecting far within.

My stillest depths straightway do only heave
More gently than rests the summer's calm,
The howling winds through my rough'ndage grieve,
Till every shelf and ledge gives the alarm.

Oft at some ruling star my tide has melted,
The sea can scarcely brag more weeks than I,
Ere other influence my waves has quelled
The staunchest bark that floats is high and
dry.